

July 2, 2010

This message is a call to action for supporters of public education who are being asked to contact Senator Carl Levin's office to show opposition to vouchers. **See the contact information below.**

AAUW has a long history of opposition to vouchers in public education. In the 2009-2011 AAUW Public Policy Program the Public Policy Principles for Action specify that, "AAUW believes that quality public education is the foundation of a democratic society." In the Biennial Action Priorities the text reads, "To support a strong system of public education that promotes gender fairness, equity, and diversity, AAUW advocates opposition to the use of public funds for nonpublic elementary and secondary education."

I was recently informed, by Kathleen Straus, President of the Michigan State Board of Education, who had been in consultation with Roberta Stanley, Director of Federal Affairs at the National School Boards Association (NSBA) in Washington, D.C., that **there is a provision in the Department of Defense budget bill that would provide VOUCHERS for special education students who are dependents of service personnel.** The provision would put the Senate on record supporting vouchers, and could potentially set a dangerous precedent.

The strategy in dealing with the bill seems to be to let the provision pass in the Senate, then work to remove it in conference committee. However, there is no assurance that the proposed strategy will work.

I have been in communication with Lecia Imbery, AAUW Public Policy Grassroots Advocacy Coordinator, who assured me that her office is working with Roberta Stanley at NSBA and trying to get the voucher provision removed from the bill. She suggested that phone calls or personal contacts from Michigan constituents would be helpful to national AAUW efforts. Please contact Senator Levin's office and request that the voucher provision be removed from the bill.

Senator Carl Levin
269 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510
Phone: (202) 224-6221
Fax: (202) 224-1388
www.levin.senate.gov

Thank you for your participation on this important issue.

Barbara Bonsignore
AAUW of Michigan Public Policy Director
2665 Steamboat Springs Drive
Rochester Hills, MI 48309
(248) 375-0062
E-mail: bjbaauw1@aol.com